



## NATIVE ANIMAL RESCUE

# VOLUNTEER CODE OF PRACTICE

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<b>Signed</b>		

## **Introduction**

This Volunteer Code of Conduct provides Native Animal Rescue (NAR) members and volunteers with guidelines for acceptable professional conduct. The code addresses ethical responsibility and encourages greater transparency and accountability.

## **Background**

Native Animal Rescue (NAR) is a voluntary organisation established to care for sick injured and threatened wildlife. The members of NAR act to appoint a Board and an Executive Committee. The Board recommends general policy and directions to the members for ratification, and the Executive Committee is responsible for the day to day management of NAR.

NAR operates under the auspices of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and the authority it exercises over animals coming into its care is authority ascribed to it by DEC, which has legal responsibility for all native wildlife in Western Australia. As such, NAR receives wild species from the public and various agencies, it assesses the animals with the support of professional veterinarians and takes appropriate action to either euthanise or rehabilitate the animals, as is determined appropriate by the Executive or personnel authorised by the Executive.

## **Authority Structures**

Some members of the Executive are appointed with specific management roles that impact directly on the work of volunteers caring for animals. Other than the President and Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, there are positions of Clinic Liaison Officer and Grounds Liaison Officer which give directions relating to the work of volunteers. The Executive appoints committees from the membership to assist it in the management of NAR.

The Animal Management Committee, is delegated authority by the Executive to work closely with veterinarians to manage the animals under the care of NAR, to determine the timing and location for release of rehabilitated animals and to manage such releases.

NAR manages its day to day operations through structured shifts involving rostered volunteers under the direction of a Shift Supervisor. The respective Shift Supervisor is the delegated person of authority for each volunteer shift. Members of Executive are also persons of authority, for volunteers on shift, but they will exercise their authority through or with the knowledge of the Shift Supervisor. In the event that the Shift Supervisor is not available, an Executive member is to be contacted where authorisation of actions is required.

## **Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers**

All volunteers are required to become members of NAR. As a volunteer at NAR, you are bound to comply at all times with the policies and procedures determined by NAR through its Board and Executive. These shall be made available to volunteers, as they are developed, changed and implemented.

In the course of undertaking their responsibilities at NAR, volunteers may well identify concerns about or ways of improving work procedures, care of animals or welfare of staff and volunteers. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to comment and share such observations with either their Shift Supervisor or a member of Executive, who shall present the matter to the Executive Committee for further consideration.

Volunteers who consistently fail to comply with the requirements of this code of conduct, or demonstrate threatening behaviour, either in person or any other method of communication, shall be asked to leave NAR premises. If so requested, a volunteer is to cease work, collect any personal effects and immediately leave the premises. The volunteer is not to attend NAR premises until the matter has been considered by the Executive Committee, and the Executive has given permission to return.

A detailed report of the circumstances leading up to the dismissal shall be referred to the next meeting of the Executive for their consideration. The Executive shall consider the issue and determine whether the volunteer is to be permitted to return to NAR and under what conditions, or to be permanently prevented from participating as a volunteer. Such decision of the Executive shall be sent in writing to the volunteer. If the volunteer is not prepared to accept the decision of the Executive, they may request that the matter be heard by the Board. The Board shall then hear the matter at its next meeting. The volunteer shall have the right to make personal or written representation to the Board but the decision of the Board shall be final.

## **Animal Care**

Volunteers who work at NAR must recognise and accept that it is not appropriate to keep all animals alive and animals that:

- do not have the capacity to be restored to a good quality of life;
- are going to suffer unreasonably extended periods of pain;
- have injuries that records of previous admissions indicate result in an unacceptably low probability of rehabilitation;
- carry on incurable disease that will eventually be debilitating or painful to the animal;
- carry an incurable disease that is transmissible to other animals, either in captivity or the wild; or
- Are introduced or exotic species who's presence has been determined to be detrimental to the health and well being of native species;

may well be euthanised in the best interests of the animal or protection of native fauna.

At times animals brought to NAR shall require regular care that cannot be provided within the shift times alone. Some volunteers may be needed to care for such animals at home. Volunteers must be authorized by a person of authority, before such animals are taken home, and shall be required to demonstrate their capacity to undertake such care. NAR continues to be responsible for all animals taken into such care and such animals remain at all times under the authority of NAR and shall be cared for under the direction of the appropriate persons of authority at NAR. Volunteers shall return such animals to NAR, when so directed by NAR.

NAR may at times deem some animals, which are not able to be rehabilitated back into the wild, to be appropriate for educational purposes and may enlist the support of volunteers to undertake care of such an animal, to familiarise them with human

contact and to prepare them for educational activities. If granted such care of an animal, a volunteer accepts that such animal remains under the authority of NAR and is to be made available to NAR as required.

At times, an animal may be assessed as not suitable for release or not required for educational programs undertaken by NAR, but suitable for permanent care under captivity. In such cases, a volunteer may be permitted to keep the animal under permanent care. NAR has the right to determine the suitability of a volunteer to undertake such care. When such animals are transferred to the permanent care of a volunteer, the control of the animal may be transferred, in writing, to the respective volunteer, subject to requirements of the Department of Environment and Conservation.

If a volunteer has a concern about the way in which an animal is being cared at NAR, the volunteer should raise the matter with the shift supervisor. If the matter cannot be resolved by the shift supervisor to the satisfaction of the volunteer, the volunteer may request that the matter be referred to a member of the Executive, preferably the Clinic Liaison Officer, and the shift supervisor shall refer the matter for the attention of the Executive.

All animals delivered to NAR come under the authority of NAR and are not to be removed from the premises without the expressed permission of a person in authority.

## **Respect for People and Property**

Volunteers are at all times to respect each other, the property of each other and the property of NAR.

Theft, deliberate destruction of property or sustained careless use of NAR property and materials shall result in dismissal of a volunteer.

Removal of NAR property and animal feed from NAR, without the express permission of a person in authority, is theft and will be dealt with as such.

Derogatory comments and offensive language, including sexist and racist comments, are not acceptable practices and all volunteers and members are expected to demonstrate respect for the feelings of each other.

Damage of any property, shall be reported immediately to the senior staff person on shift.

## **Public Comment**

Volunteers shall not, at any time, in public forums or to the media make representations about the activities of NAR or speak on behalf of NAR.

Volunteers, who become aware of an issue that they believe requires public comment, should bring such matter to the attention of their shift supervisor or a member of Executive and request that the Executive take action to address the issue. Volunteers accept that the decision of the Executive shall be final. This does not preclude a volunteer taking action on their own behalf, but such action must be clearly taken as a private individual and must not mention the name of NAR nor the specific fact that you work as a volunteer with NAR nor seek to include or implicate NAR in any way.

## **Photography**

No volunteer shall take photographs of animals at Native Animal Rescue, without specific permission for each and every photography occasion. No photographs of animals at NAR shall be published on websites or electronic social pages of any kind, without specific permission for each photo.

## **Solo Rescues**

No volunteer shall undertake the rescue of an animal on their own, where that rescue requires the attendance at a residential house or private property or requires the volunteer to operate in a potentially dangerous environment. By way of example, such dangerous environments shall include situations where it is necessary to enter lakes, rivers and waterways to rescue an animal and removal of animals from busy roadways.

## **Risk Taking**

No volunteer shall place themselves in a position of risk for the sake of rescuing an animal. In such cases, a senior staff person at NAR shall be contacted for guidance. If the risk is assessed as to be unacceptable, the animal shall not be rescued. By way of example, this includes entry into any situations where there is risk of exposure to electric shock, harm from chemicals and exposure to flames.